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## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Mayor and Council Members  
**CC:** Spencer Cronk, City Manager  
James Scarboro, Purchasing Officer  
**FROM:** Jackie A. Sargent, General Manager *JAS*  
**DATE:** November 8, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** November 14, 2019, Council Agenda Item #30: grounds maintenance services for Austin Energy substations

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Item #30 on the November 14, 2019, City Council Agenda requests approval of a contract for grounds maintenance services for electric substations and adjacent lots across Austin Energy's service territory. While this item was bid and is posted as a five-year contract, Austin Energy seeks only one year of contract spending authority at this time in order to allow for the continued analysis of the use of contracting for these services.

### **Background**

Austin Energy's substations and surrounding areas must be maintained in accordance with regulatory requirements and also to ensure adherence to community expectations. While these sites are maintained throughout the year, the need for grounds maintenance services are greatly influenced by seasonal peaks in vegetation growth and by the weather.

Because of the seasonal and irregular nature of this work, a vendor has previously provided labor, supervision, equipment, and materials necessary for mowing of grass, removal of trash, irrigation repair, and the pruning of vegetation, trees, and shrubs at substation sites. On June 3, 2019, Austin Energy issued a solicitation to continue grounds maintenance services for substation sites. The current contract expires on November 23, 2019.

### **Contract Labor**

On August 22, 2019, City Council adopted Resolution No. 20190822-067 directing the City Manager to determine whether custodial, security, call center, groundskeeping, and similar general services, or labor-intensive services should be contracted or provided by City employees.

Because the Resolution's requirements came after the solicitation at issue, Austin Energy seeks approval of this substation grounds maintenance contract to allow additional time to assess whether this work can be restructured in a way in which the flexibility and irregularity of contracted work can be performed by City employees.

## **Moving Forward**

Austin Energy appreciates Council's policy that individuals delivering consistent municipal service should be included in the City's workforce, and we will seek to do so when possible. Austin Energy, in collaboration with the Purchasing Office, Budget Office, Building Services, and the Human Resources Department, is performing an analysis of all contracted custodial, security, call center, and landscaping contracts. At this time, Austin Energy requests City Council approval of substation grounds maintenance services to allow for the completion of an analysis, prior to Fiscal Year 2020-21 budget submittal, to support a recommendation to insource or contract for these services.

Please contact me if you have questions or would like additional information.